

Meth Lab Trash

Methamphetamine is made in illegal laboratories and has a high potential for abuse and addiction. Methamphetamine is closely related chemically to amphetamine, but the central nervous system effects of methamphetamine are greater. Street methamphetamine is referred to by many names, such as "speed," "meth," and "chalk." Methamphetamine hydrochloride, clear chunky crystals resembling ice, which can be inhaled by smoking, is referred to as "ice," "crystal," "glass," and "tina."

Over 300 different chemicals can be used in the production of the drug depending on the procedure used. The waste can be disposed of in many different ways, sometimes on the side of the road. The following reviews some of the waste generated by Methamphetamine Labs.

- Plastic pop/juice/water bottles with tubing coming out of the top.
- Propane cylinders (typical of gas grills) used to transport anhydrous ammonia. This ammonia can burn your skin and cause very severe respiratory damage. These tanks, when used with the brass fitting, can explode when moved. The ammonia degrades the brass to the point where it can blow the fitting out of the tank, endangering individuals in the area. The brass fittings on the tanks will turn a blue to blue green color as shown in the picture on the left. Some tanks have been modified with other fittings. If you find cylinders, **DO NOT TOUCH** but note location and report it to the nearest law enforcement agency.
- Coffee filters with red stains/powder or white residue.
- Empty medicine boxes and blister packs for over the counter cold and asthma medicines (products that contain ephedrine or pseudoephedrine).
- Lithium batteries that appear to be unrolled.
- Bags containing a reddish/white powder.
- Respirator masks.
- Rubber gloves.
- Plastic or rubber tubing, hoses, and clamps.
- Pyrex glass, Corning ware, or other glass cookware.
- Bed sheets or pillow cases stained red or containing a white powdery residue.
- Engine starting fluid cans (punctured and drained of ethyl ether).
- Empty drain cleaner containers (lye).
- Kitty litter.
- Empty bottles of 'rubbing' alcohol, acetone, toluene, or paint thinner.
- Empty cans of Coleman/Camping fuel (naphtha).
- Empty containers of sulfuric, muriatic, or phosphoric acid.



If you come across what appears to be meth lab waste, do not touch it, and report the location to your supervisor and local law enforcement agency.

References:

Minnesota Department of Transportation, Safety Alert, Hazardous Materials.
National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Colorado Department of Transportation, Meth Lab Awareness for Adopt-A-Highway Groups.
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Methamphetamine (Meth) Lab FAQ.
Van Buren County, Meth Lab Trash.

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If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact:

Scott Wheeler, Roadside Program Specialist, Maintenance, MDOT, 517-322-3314. Email: wheelers@michigan.gov

Jim Gaus, Occupational Safety Advisor, Safety Administration, MDOT, 517-241-4188. Email: gausj@michigan.gov or email MDOT Safety at: MDOT-SafetyAdmin@michigan.gov

For other Safety Topics, please visit the *Connect MDOT* Safety Administration Services Web site, Occupational Safety, [Safety Topics](#).

As with any training, please be sure to take attendance. Fax a copy of the attendance sheet to Safety Administration at 335-2787 and file the original in your training files for later reference. The training attendance sheet is form #0037 on the MDOT form Web site on *Connect MDOT*.